

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CGEN

SUBJECT: PROPOSED NEW US-ITALY CONSULAR CONVENTION

REF; STATE 052051

1. CONGEN'S REVIEW OF 1878 U.S.-ITALY BILATERAL CONSULAR CONVENTION AND MULTILATERAL VIENNA CONVENTION OF 1963 INDICATES THAT OUR PRINCIPAL PROBLEMS LIE IN THE AREA OF PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES AND INCLUDE FOLLOWING:

(A) VALUE ADDED TAX. U.S. MISSION IN ITALY (INCLUDING CONGEN) AND ITS AMERICAN PERSONNEL ARE EXEMPT FROM VALUE ADDED (IVA) TAXES LEVIED ON THEIR VARIOUS PURCHASES AND SERVICES IN ITALY UNDER

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VIENNA CONVENTION. HOWEVER, GOI CLAIMS THAT ADMINISTRATIVE DIFFICULTIES PERMIT TAX EXEMPTION ONLY FOR PURCHASES EXCEEDING 100,000 LIRE. MOREOVER, PROCEDURE TO OBTAIN EVEN THIS EXEMPTION FROM FOREIGN OFFICE REQUIRES 30-40 DAYS AND DELAY OF PURCHASE FOR THIS LENGTH OF TIME OFTEN NOT POSSIBLE. RESULT, AS PRACTICAL MATTER, IS THAT IN SPITE OF TOTAL EXEMPTION, U.S. MISSION AND PERSONNEL ARE PAYING SUBSTANTIAL IVA TAXES, AND EFFORTS TO OBTAIN MORE SATISFACTORY PROCEDURE HAVE FAILED.

(B) VEHICLE IMPORTS. IT CURRENTLY REQUIRES FROM 60-90 DAYS
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TO OBTAIN REQUIRED CERTIFICATE FOR IMPORTATION OF VEHICLE

INTO ITALY.

(C) LICENSE PLATES. ADDITIONAL 90 DAYS BEYOND OFFICIAL IMPORTATION REQUIRED TO OBTAIN LICENSE PLATES.

(D) DUTY FREE CERTIFICATES. CERTIFICATES TO PERMIT DUTY FREE IMPORTS SELDOM OBTAINED IN LESS THAN 45 DAYS.

(E) OTHER PRIVILEGES. ALTHOUGH MOST CONGEN OFFICERS HOLD DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS AND CONSULAR COMMISSIONS, THEY CANNOT PURCHASE VEHICLES AT DIPLOMATIC PRICES SOLELY BECAUSE THEY NOT AUTHORIZED DIPLOMATIC LICENSE PLATES. MOREOVER, BECAUSE THESE OFFICERS HAVE

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LOCALLY-ISSUED RATHER THAN DIPLOMATIC CORPS OR CONSULAR CORPS LICENSE PLATES, INSURANCE RATES ARE SUBSTANTIALLY HIGHER.

2. CONGEN WOULD BE PLEASED TO FORWARD DETAILED COMMENTS ON ISSUES RAISED ABOVE IF AND WHEN NEGOTIATION OF NEW CONSULAR CONVENTION MOVES FORWARD.

3. CONGEN'S RELATIONS WITH ITALIAN OFFICIALS THROUGHOUT CONSULAR DISTRICT ARE EXCELLENT. WE ARE PROMPTLY ADVISED CONCERNING ALL AMERICANS WHO ARE ARRESTED, HOSPITALIZED, OR DECEASED. ACCESS TO AMERICANS ONCE ARRESTED OR DETAINED IS EQUAL AND SOMETIMES SUPERIOR TO THAT AFFORDED ITALIAN NATIONALS. WE KNOW OF NO INCIDENTS WHERE SIGNIFICANT DIFFICULTIES HAVE ARISEN.

HOROWITZ

GDS-80

NOTE BY OC/T: REFTEL UNRELATED POST AND SUBJECT. CORRECT REF NOT IDENTIFIED.

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